

Message Text

PAGE 01 NICOSI 00706 021542 Z

53

ACTION IO-13

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FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7167

INFO USMISSION UN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

S E C R E T NICOSIA 706

EO 11652: GDS MOPS

TAGS: PFOR CY UN

SUBJECT: UNFICYP

REF: STATE 57833 AND PREV.

FOR ASST SECS SISCO AND DE PALMA; USUN FOR AMB SCALI

SUMMARY: WE RECOMMEND THAT IN UPCOMING TALKS AMONG UNFICYP CONTRIBUTORS, USG SHOULD ADVOCATE ITS CONVERSION TO AN OBSERVER FORCE, PROBABLY THROUGH INTERMEDIATE STAGE OF A STREAMLINED FORCE OF PRESENT CHARACTER. WE BELIEVE TIME IS RIPE TO SEEK END TO CONTINUING FORCE BUDGET DEFICITS AND TO TAILOR UNFICYP MORE PRECISELY TO ITS PRESENT, QUASI- PERMANENT RESPONSIBILITIES. WE PROPOSE ACTION WHICH MIGHT BE TAKEN IN JUNE UN SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING TO GET PROCESS STARTED. END SUMMARY.

1. WE WELCOME DEPTS DECISION TO PROCEED WITH CONSULTATIONS ON FUTURE OF UNFICYP. WE AGREE BEST WAY TO GET SECRET

PAGE 02 NICOSI 00706 021542 Z

A GRIP ON PROBLEM CREATED BY PERSISTENT UNFICYP DEFICIT IS TO PRESS NOW FOR ANOTHER FORCE STRUCTURE STUDY, SIMILAR TO

THE ONE DONE IN 1969, IN ORDER TO SHAKE OUT MORE EXCESS MANPOWER. AS INDICATED BELOW, WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE A THOROUGHGOING REORGANIZATION OF UNFICYP TO MAKE IT AN OBSERVER FORCE, BUT IF AS WE SUSPECT THIS IS TOO DRASTIC A CHANGE TO BE LAID ON BEFORE JUNE UN SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING, STEPS TO STREAMLINE PRESENT FORCE WOULD NEVERTHELESS BE DESIRABLE.

2. CUTTING AND TRIMMING UNFICYP AS IT PRESENTLY FUNCTIONS CAN ONLY BE AN INTERMEDIATE STEP. THERE IS NO ASSURANCE THAT A SMALLER FORCE WILL NOT BE ACCOMPANIED BY SMALLER CONTRIBUTIONS, AND THAT DEFICITS WILL NOT CONTINUE INDEFINITELY. MOREOVER, TO LIMIT EXERCISE TO JUST ANOTHER SLIM- ODOWN STUDY IS TO EVADE ONCE AGAIN THE BASIC UNFICYP PROBLEM: HOW LONG SHOULD UNFICYP CONTRIBUTORS ALLOW THEMSELVES TO BE USED BY PARTIES TO THE CYPRUS PROBLEM AS A PERMANENT CRUTCH, WHILE CURRENT CYPRUS DEADLOCK DRAGS ON INDEFINITELY?

3. FOR THE FACT MUST BE FACED: UNFICYP, ORIGINALLY A THREE MONTH PEACEKEEPING OPERATION, HAS BECOME INSTITUTIONALIZED AS A STANDING ELEMENT IN THE CYPRUS LANDSCAPE. CERTAINLY AS LONG AS CONTROVERSY CONTINUES BETWEEN GREEK AND TURK CYPRIOTS, WITH POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT BEYOND CYPRUS BORDERS IF FIGHTING BREAKS OUT HERE, SOME SORT OF PEACEKEEPING FORCE IS A PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PRACTICAL NECESSITY. BUT THE KIND OF FORCE EXISTING TODAY IS AS MUCH A HISTORICAL ACCIDENT AS A PLANNED DETERRENT.

4. KEY QUESTION HERE IS WHETHER UNFICYP SYSTEM OF FIXED OBSERVATION POSTS, WHICH SOAKS UP MANPOWER, IS STILL NECESSARY. ORIGINALLY IT SERVED AN OBVIOUS PURPOSE. THERE WAS INTERMITTENT INTERCOMMUNAL VIOLENCE. LINES WERE NOT COMPLETELY STABILIZED. FORMAL AND INFORMAL AVENUES OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN GREEK AND TURKISH CYPRIOTS WERE LESS WELL ESTABLISHED. EVEN SO, UNFICYP WAS NEVER DESIGNED AS A PEACEKEEPING FORCE THAT WOULD FIGHT TO COUNTER A SIZABLE ATTACK DIRECTED BY ONE SIDE AGAINST THE OTHER, OR TO IMPOSE A TRUCE BY FORCE IF A REAL CONFLICT SHOULD BREAK OUT.

SECRET

PAGE 03 NICOSI 00706 021542 Z

5. WE THINK MANY STATIC POSTS ARE NOW EXPENDABLE. IN ALL BUT A HANDFUL OF THEM, PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF SENTRIES DOES NOT SEEM TO US DECISIVE OR EVEN VERY PERTINENT TO MAINTENANCE OF PEACE. WE ARE IMPRESSED WITH SELF-DISCIPLINE EXERCISED BY THE TWO COMMUNITIES IN EVERY CASE WHICH HAS ARISEN SINCE 1968, WHERE INCIDENTS HAVE BEEN SETTLED ALMOST ENTIRELY WITHOUT THE PHYSICAL INTERPOSITION OF UN TROOPS.

6. UNFICYP PRESENCE IS VALUABLE AS A NEGOTIATING CHANNEL, A MEDIATING AGENCY, AND A FACE SAVER. IF IT DID NOT EXIST IN THIS ASPECT IT WOULD HAVE TO BE INVENTED. BUT MANPOWER ON PRESENTLY EXISTING SCALE IS QUITE UNNECESSARY FOR THESE FUNCTIONS.

7. WHERE UN MANPOWER IS NEEDED TO INTERCEDE WITH CONTESTANTS, IT CAN BE QUICKLY BROUGHT TO SCENE FROM CENTRAL CANTONMENTS IN CYPRUS. WE WOULD DEFER TO RESULTS OF A PROFESSIONAL MILITARY STUDY, BUT WE BELIEVE UNFICYP EFFECTIVENESS COULD BE VERY SATISFACTORILY MAINTAINED THROUGH USE OF NOT MORE THAN TEN OR TWELVE OBSERVATION POSTS (LOCATED PERHAPS IN NICOSIA, FAMAGUSTA, ARTEMIS ROAD IN LARNACA, KOPHINO, LIMASSOL AND PAPHOS); MORE EMPHASIS ON MOBILE PATROLS; AND SEVERAL SMALL RESERVE FORCES AS AT PRESENT. HEADQUARTERS ELEMENT IN EACH CONTINGENT COULD BE REDUCED OR ELIMINATED; AUSTRIAN FIELD HOSPITAL COULD BE CLOSED AND TROOPS TREATED AT BRITISH HOSPITALS IN SBA'S; AND OTHER EXPENSIVE AUXILIARY OPERATIONS COULD BE EXAMINED FOR PRUNING. CIVILIAN POLICE UNITS AND ECONOMIC LIAISON OFFICERS WOULD REMAIN.

8. WE SUGGEST, IN SHORT, THAT TIME HAS COME FOR USG TO MAKE REAL PITCH WITH OTHER CONTRIBUTORS AND WITH UN SECRETARY GENERAL FOR IMMEDIATE START OF PLANNING TO TRANSFER UNFICYP INTO A MOBILE OBSERVER FORCE, COMMONLY ACCEPTED ROUND FIGURE FOR SUCH A FORCE IS 500 MEN. THERE WOULD BE HIGH PROPORTION OF FIELD GRADE AND POLICE OFFICERS, AND CONTRIBUTING COUNTRIES SHOULD BE ASKED TO PAY (OR CONTINUE TO PAY) THEIR BASIC SALARIES. EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO FOLD REDUCED COST OF FORCE INTO REGULAR UN BUDGET, SO AS TO END DEFICIT AND PRESENT UNFAIR AND UNDEPENDABLE FINANCING.

SECRET

PAGE 04 NICOSI 00706 021542 Z

9. DISCUSSION WITH UN AND OTHER CONTRIBUTORS WILL PROBABLY DISCLOSE THAT THIS IS TOO DRASTIC A CHANGE TO EFFECTUATE QUICKLY. IF SO, AS A FIRST STEP IN THE DESIRED DIRECTION, WE SUGGEST A HARD LOOK AT CANADIAN THOUGHTS FOR SLIMMING DOWN UNFICYP DESCRIBED NICOSIA 402. THESE IDEAS APPEAR REASONABLE TO US. WITH STREAMLINED HEADQUARTERS AND RETENTION OF CIVILIAN POLICE AND ECONOMIC OFFICERS, THEY WOULD IF IMPLEMENTED RESULT IN AN UNFICYP COMPRISING PERHAPS 1500 TO 2000 MEN AS COMPARED WITH PRESENT 3100.

10. WE HOPE THAT IN NEXT FEW WEEKS US CAN DISCUSS THESE AND ANY OTHER PROPOSALS FOR CUTTING BACK UNFICYP WITH ALL GROUP I CONTRIBUTORS AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES. OBJECTIVE SHOULD BE TO BE ABLE TO INCLUDE IN JUNE UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION LANGUAGE WHICH WOULD SANCTION, FIRST, REDUCED FORCE ALONG LINES PARA 9 ABOVE, AND AS SECOND STAGE,

DEVELOPMENT OF AN OBSERVER FORCE. RESOLUTION SHOULD ALTER UNFICYP MANDATE AS REQUIRED TO PERMIT THIS EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS. SECY GEN SHOULD BE REQUESTED TO NEGOTIATE AND REPORT ON FIRST STAGE TO DEC 1973 UNSC MEETING, AND TO ACCOMPLISH FULL CONVERSION TO OBSERVER FORCE ALONG LINES ENVISAGED ABOVE SOONEST THEREAFTER.

11. WE KNOW HOW DIFFICULT IT IS TO TAMPER WITH EXISTING STRUCTURE OF A MULTINATIONAL ORGANIZATION LIKE UNFICYP WITHOUT RISKING THE ALIENATION OF ITS PRESENT SUPPORTERS. BUT WE THINK THIS IS AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY TO STOP THE ENDLESS DRIFT OF DEFICIT FINANCING. OUR 1972 \$8 MILLION SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION -- INEFFECTIVE IN PRODUCING SOLVENCY, IT NOW APPEARS -- GIVES US THE RIGHT TO SPEAK UP. THE INTER-COMMUNAL SITUATION IS NO WORSE THAN USUAL, THOUGH NO SOLUTION IS IN SIGHT. ELECTIONS ARE OVER. NICOSIA/ ATHENS RELATIONS SEEM TO BE IMPROVING, SO THAT GREECE AS WELL AS TURKEY MAY BE ABLE TO EXERT MORE CONSTRUCTIVE INFLUENCE ON SITUATION IN FUTURE. THE GRIVAS THREAT CONTINUES, BUT SO FAR AT LEAST IT IS AN ALL GREEK QUARREL TO WHICH UNFICYP MANDATE IS NOT IMMEDIATELY RELEVANT. WHY NOT SEIZE THE MOMENT TO TRY TO PUT UNFICYP ON A MORE RATIONAL FOOTING, AT A LEVEL OF SIZE AND COST THE UN CAN BEAR FOR AS LONG AS THERE IS NEED FOR A CONTINUING UN PRESENCE?

12. WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN ADDRESSEES REACTIONS.
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PAGE 05 NICOSI 00706 021542 Z

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